

## 3 girls garden

GROW.GATHER.GIVE.

# Perennials for your Cut Flower Garden

Why choose perennials? In my experience, most people don't need a dedicated cut flower garden, they need ways to incorporate flowers that are good for cutting in their everyday garden or yard to cut occasionally AND enjoy in their landscape. Perennials are perfect for achieving this. They are reliable, available in tons of varieties and colors, and come back year after year with very little care! The only downside to perennials is they cost a little more from your local nursery or online retailers. The great news is, if you don't want to spend the money on plants that are already established, many perennials are easy to grow from seed with a little time and patience. You can also purchase a couple plants every year to spread out the financial impact. Also, many perennials need to be divided every 3-5 years so your plants will multiply and you don't have to spend a dime! These are 10 of my favorite perennials to enjoy in the garden and the vase:



1. **Shasta Daisy** (*Leucanthemum superbum*) What's not to love about Daisies? They are the happiest flower right? Not only are they easy to grow in all types of soils, they attract beneficial pollinators and butterflies to your garden and they bloom almost all summer long. If you are looking for something more unique than the traditional white daisy, they are also available in cream, yellow, and other fluffy many petaled varieties. Cut stems 18 inches long and strip off the leaves so they don't muddy the water. Hardiness zones 4-8.

2. **Columbine** (*Aquilegia*) I have loved Columbine since I was a little girl when my Grandma showed me how to suck the sweet nectar out of the tiny petal tubes. It comes in many colors and varieties, a reliable spring bloomer, bridging the gap between spring bulbs and summer annuals. Columbine will easily self-sow and create some fun new hybrids if there are other varieties around to cross pollinate. Make sure to select varieties that are over 18 inches tall to make them suitable for cutting. Cut when you can see color, but the flower isn't all the way open. Hardiness Zones 4-8.





3. **Sedum** (Stone crop, *Hylotelephium*) This might be a surprising edition to this perennial list, but tall varieties of Sedum like 'Autumn Joy' are beautiful additions to your landscaping. They emerge in the spring looking almost like little mounds of cabbage, then throughout the summer their lime green buds add visual interest until the Fall when each little flower finally bursts into bloom. They are good for cut flowers at all stages from bud to bloom. If I haven't convinced you to try Sedum yet, they are also drought tolerant, attract pollinators and butterflies, and rabbit resistant. I am excited to try some varieties with dark burgundy stems and leaves! Hardiness zones 3-10.

4. **Delphinium** (*Delphinium elatum*) True blue is a very hard color to come by in the plant world, but Delphiniums accomplish it with so much beauty. They come in a range of colors from white to pink to blue. They attract pollinators and butterflies, they are rabbit resistant and very hardy. Delphiniums do like a more nutrient rich soil, so they may have to be fertilized more often than other perennials. Cut when about 3/4s of the florets are open on a stem. Hardiness Zones 3-7.



5. **Veronica** (Speedwell, *Lamiales Veronica*) Veronica is another tall, spiky perennial that can really set your garden apart! Veronica comes in a range of colors and varieties. Make sure to purchase a tall variety. Some are very beautiful, but more of a groundcover. Veronica is drought tolerant, attracts beneficial insects and is deer and rabbit resistant! I am especially partial to white Veronica. Hardiness Zones 4-8.

6. **Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea*) Is there a more classic perennial than Echinacea? New varieties and colors almost seem endless. I am anxious to get my hands on some of the peachy orange varieties. Echinacea is loved by birds for the seeds, butterflies, pollinators and people alike. They are drought and humidity tolerant and rabbit and deer resistant. Very easy to grow and rarely need dividing. Add some Echinacea to your yard. You won't regret it! Hardiness Zones 4-9.





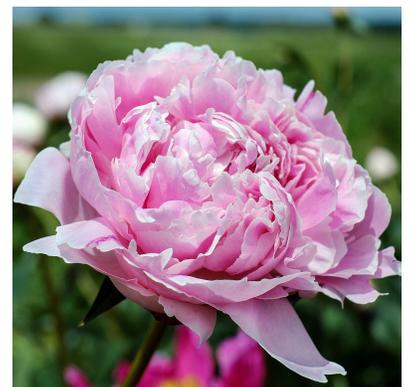
7. **Perennial Salvia** (Meadow Sage) I think I have a thing for the tall spiky perennials! They just add so much interest to the landscape. The purple varieties are very common in my area because they are so easy and low maintenance. I love the sagey scent and they are always covered in pollinating insects. If you cut back the flowers after the first flush in the early summer another smaller flush of flowers will come on in late summer. Hardiness Zones 4-8.

8. **Garden Phlox** (*Phlox paniculata*) Perennial phlox is a cottage garden staple. They are beautiful, fragrant, and attract many beneficial insects. They truly are a stunning perennial. Make sure to purchase medium to tall varieties for cutting, as some phlox are ground covers. Phlox can also be divided every 3-5 years so you can have even more flowers to love! Every time I see a new color I kind of want it! Hardiness zones 4-8.



9. **Globe Thistle** (*Echinops*) When I was transplanting some Day Lilies from my Aunt's garden I unknowingly got a piece of Echinops with my Lily. Boy was I surprised when this almost Dr. Seuss-like flower bloomed in the middle of my Day Lily! This is a truly unique and interesting flower. The flower heads are spiky, but not sharp and they almost glow in the garden. They are very hardy and tolerant of all soil types. If you want a truly unique flower, try this! Hardiness Zone 3-8.

10. **Peony** (*Paeonia*) There is no way I could write a cut flower perennial guide and leave Peonies off the list! Peonies are the Queen of perennials. They are the epitome of beautiful, hardy and one of the longest lived perennials, lasting up to 50 years! They are deer resistant and so easy to grow. If cut when the buds are barely spongy, like a marshmallow, they can be stored in a refrigerator for up to 6 weeks to extend their season. The only draw-back to peonies is they just don't bloom long enough. Peonies are easily one of my favorite focal flowers in bouquets and to enjoy as part of my landscape. Hardiness zones 3-7.



I hope you have enjoyed this list of perennials to cut for your home as well as incorporate and enjoy in your landscape! It is not an exhaustive list, but these are 10 perennials that I know and love. I also hope that this will inspire you to plant some unique and interesting flowers in your yard and to enjoy the peace and satisfaction that comes from connecting with nature everywhere that it is found!



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